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BURR & FORMAN

January 6, 2021

Ms. Jocelyn Boyd
Chief Clerk and Administrator
South Carolina Public Service Commission
Synergy Business Park, The Saluda Building
101 Executive Center Drive
Columbia SC 29210

Re: Application of WC Fiber, LLC for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in Certain Census Blocks in Abbeville, Anderson, Greenwood, McCormick, Oconee, and Pickens Counties for Purposes of Receiving Federal Rural Digital Opportunity Fund ("RDOF") Phase I Support

Dear Ms. Boyd:

Please find enclosed for filing on behalf of WC Fiber, LLC ("WC FIBER"), an Application for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in Certain Census Blocks in Abbeville, Anderson, Greenwood, McCormick, Oconee, and Pickens Counties for Purposes of Receiving Federal Rural Digital Opportunity Fund ("RDOF") Phase I Support.

A proposed Notice of Filing is also enclosed for your consideration.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Burr & Forman LLP



Margaret M. Fox

MMF:khh

Enclosure: as stated

cc: Jeffrey M. Nelson, Esq. (via E-mail: jnelson@ors.sc.gov)

AL • DE • FL • GA • MS • NC • SC • TN

**BEFORE
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DOCKET NO. 2021-__-C**

IN RE:

Application of WC Fiber, LLC for Designation)
as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier)
In Certain Census Blocks in Abbeville, Anderson,)
Greenwood, McCormick, Oconee, and Pickens)
Counties for Purposes of Receiving Federal Rural Digital)
Opportunity Fund ("RDOF") Phase I Support)

**WC FIBER, LLC APPLICATION FOR
ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER DESIGNATION**

WC Fiber, LLC ("WC Fiber" or the "Applicant") is seeking designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier ("ETC") in one hundred twenty-three (123) eligible census blocks in twenty (20) census block groups located in Abbeville, Anderson, Greenwood, McCormick, Oconee, and Pickens Counties (the "Proposed Service Area")¹ in order to receive federal support under Sections 214 and 254 of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 and pursuant to the Federal Communications Commission's ("FCC's") Rural Digital Opportunity Fund ("RDOF") Phase I auction.

¹ See Exhibits A and B, list of Census Blocks and total number of locations by Census Block Group, and map showing location of Census Block Groups where WC Fiber was the winning bidder in the RDOF Phase I auction.

As demonstrated below, WC Fiber meets all of the statutory and regulatory requirements for designation as an ETC in the Proposed Service Area. Furthermore, designation of WC Fiber as an ETC in the Proposed Service Area will serve the public interest.

I. Contact Information

Applicant's name and address are as follows:

WC Fiber, LLC
P.O. Box 610
Abbeville, SC 29620

Correspondence regarding this Application should be addressed to Applicant's counsel:

M. John Bowen, Jr.
Margaret M. Fox
BURR & FORMAN LLP
Post Office Box 11390
Columbia, South Carolina 29211
Telephone: (803) 799-9800
Email: jbowen@burr.com; pfox@burr.com

The name, title, address and telephone number of the person who should be contacted in connection with general management of the company is:

Jeff T. Wilson
Chief Executive Officer
WC Fiber, LLC
P.O. Box 610
Abbeville, SC 29620
Telephone: (864) 446-9251
E-mail: jeff.wilson@wctel.com

II. Description of Applicant

WC Fiber is a competitive local exchange carrier ("CLEC") and provides local exchange services and intrastate exchange access service within geographical areas established by the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (the "Commission").

WC Fiber has authority to provide service as a CLEC in the areas for which it is seeking ETC designation, with limited exceptions.² WC Fiber is preparing to file an application with the Commission to expand its CLEC authority to include those portions of the Proposed Service Area where WC Fiber is not already authorized to provide local voice service.

III. Background

A. Background on the RDOF Auction

On January 30, 2020, the FCC adopted the *Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Report and Order*,³ establishing the framework for the RDOF including the use of reverse auctions in two phases. The RDOF was implemented to provide \$20.4 billion to connect millions of rural homes and businesses to high-speed broadband networks as part of the FCC's biggest step to close the digital divide.⁴ On July 11, 2020, the FCC adopted final procedures for Phase I of the RDOF Auction, which utilized competitive bidding to allocate up to \$16 billion over ten years to service providers that commit to offer voice and broadband services to fixed locations in eligible unserved high-cost census blocks.⁵

B. WC Fiber's Selection as a Winning Bidder

The RDOF Auction began on October 29, 2020 and completed on November 25, 2020. On December 7, 2020, the FCC issued a Public Notice, officially announcing the results of the

² See Commission Order No. 2017-404 in Docket No. 2017-83-C (granting authority to WC Fiber to provide local exchange service in those areas served by BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. d/b/a AT&T South Carolina ("AT&T") and United Telephone Company of the Carolinas, Inc. d/b/a CenturyLink ("CenturyLink"). WC Fiber does not currently have authority to provide local voice service in 2 of the 20 census block groups, *i.e.*, the census block groups located in Abbeville and McCormick that are served by Frontier Communications.

³ See generally *Rural Digital Opportunity Fund; Connect America Fund*, Order, 35 FCC Rcd 686 (2020) (*RDOF Auction Order*).

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ See *Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Phase I Auction Scheduled for October 29, 2020; Notice and Filing Requirements and Other Procedures for Auction 904*, Public Notice, FCC 20-77, 35 FCC Rcd 686 (2020) ("*Auction 904 Procedures Public Notice*"), ¶ 1.

competitive bidding.⁶ The FCC selected WC Fiber as a winning bidder for a total of 945 locations in 20 designated census block groups (“CBGs”) in South Carolina with a total support amount of \$98,189.50.⁷ As a winner in the RDOF Auction and a recipient of RDOF support, WC Fiber is required to offer at least one standalone voice plan and one service plan providing broadband at speeds of at least 1 Gbps with a latency at or below 100 ms. WC Fiber is required to build out to 40% of the requisite number of locations in South Carolina within three years of authorization.⁸ This performance benchmark increases by 20% by the end of the fourth and fifth years of support.⁹ By the end of year six, revised location totals will be announced.¹⁰ If there are fewer locations than originally estimated by the cost model, WC Fiber must serve the revised number of locations by the end of the sixth year of support.¹¹ If there are more locations than originally estimated by the cost model, WC Fiber must serve the original number of locations estimated by the cost-model by the end of the sixth year of support and must serve the rest of the locations by the end of the eighth year of support.¹²

C. Need for Expedited ETC Designation

In order to be eligible for RDOF funds, WC Fiber must be designated as an ETC in the Proposed Service Area. The FCC’s rules for the RDOF Auction did not require that participants be an ETC as of the initial short-form application filing deadline.¹³ Instead, a company that is awarded support is expected to obtain an ETC designation (encompassing receipt of high-cost

⁶ See *Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Phase I Auction (Auction 904) Closes; Winning Bidder Announced*; FCC Form 683 Due January 29, 2021, AU Docket No. 20-34, WC Docket Nos. 19-126 and 10-90, Public Notice, DA 20-1422, (rel. Dec. 7, 2020) (“*Auction 904 Results Notice*”).

⁷ *Id.*, Attachment A at p. 27.

⁸ *Auction 904 Procedures Public Notice*, para. 17.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Auction 904 Procedures Public Notice*, ¶ 136.

support) for the areas covered by its successful bids within 180 days after being announced as a winning bidder.¹⁴ Winning bidders must submit appropriate documentation of such ETC status to the FCC.¹⁵ As noted, WC Fiber has been selected as a winning bidder in the RDOF Auction for 123 eligible census blocks in South Carolina. Because the timeframe for WC Fiber to obtain ETC designation is short and the consequences of failure to do so are severe, WC Fiber respectfully requests that the Commission review this Application promptly and grant WC Fiber ETC designation in the Proposed Service Area on an expedited basis.

IV. Authority to Designate WC Fiber as an ETC

Section 214(e)(2) gives States the primary responsibility for granting ETC status.¹⁶ This section of the Act provides further: “Upon request and consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity, the State commission may, in the case of an area served by a rural telephone company, and shall, in the case of all other areas, designate more than one common carrier as an eligible telecommunications carrier for a service area designated by the State commission, so long as each additional requesting carrier meets the requirements [set forth in Section 214(e)(1) for the ETC designated area].”¹⁷

WC Fiber is a common carrier as defined in the Act. 47 USC § 153(11) defines a common carrier as “any person engaged as a common carrier for hire, in interstate or foreign communication by wire or radio or in interstate or foreign radio transmission of energy, except where reference is made to common carriers not subject to this chapter; but a person engaged in radio broadcasting shall not, insofar as such person is so engaged, be deemed a

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(2).

¹⁷ *Id.*

common carrier.”¹⁸ WC Fiber currently provides telecommunications service as a common carrier and intends to do so in the Proposed Service Area.

WC Fiber’s request for designation as an ETC in the Proposed Service Area is in the public interest, because WC Fiber seeks designation for purposes of receiving federal support to provide high-speed Internet service to unserved areas of South Carolina.

As demonstrated below, WC Fiber meets the requirements set forth in section 214(e) in the areas for which it seeks designation as an ETC.

V. WC Fiber Satisfies All the Requirements for Designation as an ETC

Section 214(e)(1) of the Act requires that a carrier designated as an ETC must, throughout the Designated Service Area:

- (A) offer the services that are supported by Federal universal service support mechanisms under section 254(c), either using its own facilities or a combination of its own facilities and resale of another carrier’s services (including the services offered by another eligible telecommunications carrier); and
- (B) advertise the availability of such services and the charges therefor using media of general distribution.

A. WC Fiber Will Offer Supported Services Through its Own Facilities or Through a Combination of its Own Facilities and Resale

In order to be designated as an ETC, a carrier must offer the services that are supported by universal support mechanisms, which are voice telephony services and broadband service as defined in Section 54.101 of the FCC’s Rules,¹⁹ either through its own facilities or a combination of its own facilities and resale of another carrier’s facilities. Section 54.101(a)(1) defines voice telephony services eligible for universal service support as:

services [that] provide voice grade access to the public switched network or its functional equivalent; minutes of use for local service provided at no additional

¹⁸ 47 USC § 153(11).

¹⁹ 47 C.F.R. §54.101.

charge to end users; access to the emergency services provided by local government or other public safety organizations, such as 911 and enhanced 911, to the extent the local government in an eligible carrier's service area has implemented 911 or enhanced 911 systems; and toll limitation services to qualifying low-income consumers as provided in subpart E of this part.²⁰

Section 54.101(a)(2) defines broadband Internet access services eligible for universal service support as:

services [that] provide the capability to transmit data to and receive data by wire or radio from all or substantially all Internet endpoints, including any capabilities that are incidental to and enable the operation of the communications service, but excluding dial-up service.²¹

The FCC has additional buildout requirements for carriers that are awarded RDOF I auction support. Pursuant to these requirements, WC Fiber must be able to provide Gigabit broadband to the 945 locations in the Proposed Service Area within a six-year period.²²

B. WC Fiber Will Offer and Provide Each of the Above-listed Services Through its Own Facilities

1. Voice Grade Access to the Public Switched Network or its Functional Equivalent

WC Fiber will provide voice grade access to the Public Switched Network or its functional equivalent using its facilities-based network. Users will have equipment installed at their premises that will enable the user to transmit and receive voice communications, including signaling associated with the transmission and receipt of telecommunications traffic. This will enable users to place and receive voice grade calls to and from other users on the public switched network. WC Fiber will provide this voice grade access to its customers through interconnection of its facilities and the public switched telephone network via its IP-Enabled/TDM switch.

²⁰ 47 C.F.R. §54.101(a)(1).

²¹ 47 C.F.R. §54.101(a)(2).

²² *RDOF Auction Order* at ¶ 45.

2. Minutes of Use for Local Service Provided at No Additional Charge to End Users

WC Fiber will offer voice products in the Proposed Service Area provisionally awarded to WC Fiber. FCC regulations require that an ETC applicant “demonstrate that it offers a local usage plan comparable to the one offered by the incumbent LEC in the service areas for which it seeks designation.”²³ The FCC further defines local usage as a measure of minutes of use of exchange service provided for a fee and without an additional charge to end users. WC Fiber will offer local service plans comparable to those offered by the incumbent local exchange carrier(s) in the areas in which it seeks ETC designation.

3. Access to Emergency Services

WC Fiber will provide access to emergency services through access to public service answering points (“PSAPs”) by dialing “911” in order to reach emergency services. The requirement that ETCs offer access to 911 or enhanced 911 (“E911”) applies only “to the extent the local government in an eligible carrier’s service area has implemented 911 or enhanced 911 systems.”²⁴ WC Fiber satisfies this requirement by providing its customers with access to enhanced emergency services by dialing “911.” As an ETC, WC Fiber will be able to expand its coverage area to allow greater access to emergency services for its customers in remote and currently unserved areas for which it seeks ETC designation.

4. Lifeline and Toll Limitation Services

WC Fiber will offer Lifeline discounts to qualifying customers and comply with federal Lifeline requirements in fulfillment of the requirement that ETCs offer Lifeline discounts to qualifying customers. Toll limitation service “denotes either toll blocking or toll control service

²³ 47 C.F.R. 54.202 (a)(1)(ii)(4).

²⁴ 47 C.F.R. § 54.101(a)(5).

for [ETCs] that are incapable of providing both services” or denotes both toll blocking and toll control service for ETCs that are capable of providing both services.²⁵ WC Fiber is able to provide both toll blocking and toll control services, or either of those services, and will provide toll limitation service in the Proposed Service Area.

5. WC Fiber Will Advertise its Universal Service Offerings

WC Fiber commits to advertise the availability of, and charges for, the supported services using media of general distribution, consistent with its existing advertising practices. The advertising will occur through a combination of media channels, such as the local newspapers in each community, website, TV ads and social media. WC Fiber will advertise these offerings in a manner that is designed to fully inform potential customers of the services available to them, to disclose all associated rates, and to insure that qualifying low-income individuals are informed about the availability and cost of Lifeline programs.

C. WC Fiber Meets the Additional Eligibility Criteria Adopted by the FCC

In its *2005 ETC Order*,²⁶ the FCC adopted additional criteria that all ETC applicants must satisfy in order to be granted ETC status. The criteria, as set forth in Section 54.202 of the FCC’s Rules, require that an ETC applicant must: (1) certify that it will comply with the service requirements applicable to the support that it receives; (2) submit a five-year plan that describes with specificity proposed improvements or upgrades to the applicant’s network throughout its proposed service area; (3) demonstrate its ability to remain functional in emergency situations; (4)

²⁵ *Id.* 47 C.F.R. § 54.404(b) defines toll blocking as “a service provided by an [ETC] that lets subscribers elect not to allow the completion of outgoing toll calls from their telecommunications channel” while 47 C.F.R. § 54.404(c) defines toll control as “a service provided by an [ETC] that allows subscribers to specify a certain amount of toll usage that may be incurred on their telecommunications channel per month or per billing cycle.”

²⁶ *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, CC Docket No. 96-45, Report and Order, FCC 05-46 (rel. Mar. 17, 2005) (“*2005 ETC Order*”).

demonstrate that it will satisfy consumer protection and service quality standards.²⁷ To the extent applicable, WC Fiber will meet these additional criteria.

1. WC Fiber Certifies that it Will Comply with Service Requirements Applicable to the Support that it Receives

In its *2005 ETC Order*, the FCC required that an ETC applicant “make specific commitments to provide service to requesting customers in the service areas for which it is designated as an ETC.”²⁸ Specifically, the FCC found that

if the ETC's network already passes or covers the potential customer's premises, the ETC should provide service immediately. In those instances where a request comes from a potential customer within the applicant's licensed service area but outside its existing network coverage, the ETC applicant should provide service within a reasonable period of time if service can be provided at reasonable cost by: (1) modifying or replacing the requesting customer's equipment; (2) deploying a roof-mounted antenna or other equipment; (3) adjusting the nearest cell tower; (4) adjusting network or customer facilities; (5) reselling services from another carrier's facilities to provide service; or (6) employing, leasing, or constructing an additional cell site, cell extender, repeater, or other similar equipment.²⁹

The FCC stated that if an ETC applicant determines that it cannot serve the customer using one or more of these methods, “then the ETC must report the unfulfilled request to the [FCC] within 30 days after making such determination.”³⁰

WC Fiber hereby certifies that it will comply with the service requirements applicable to the supported voice and broadband services that it will be offering in the Proposed Service Area, including the requirements for the RDOF I auction program.

²⁷ See, 47 C.F.R. § 54.202. For recipients of CAF Phase II support, the FCC waived the requirement that winning bidders seeking an FCC ETC designation file a five-year improvement plan and demonstrate that it will satisfy applicable consumer protection and service quality standards. See *Connect America Fund, et al., WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, 31 FCC Rcd 5949 (2016) (*CAF Phase II Auction Order*) at ¶¶ 157-68. Likewise, for purposes of the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, the FCC incorporated by reference the analysis of forbearance factors that it considered and found warranted in CAF Phase II. See *RDOF Auction Order* at p. 44, n. 271; see also *Auction 904 Procedures Order* at ¶ 136 and n. 308.

²⁸ *2005 ETC Order* at ¶ 22.

²⁹ *Id.* (footnotes omitted).

³⁰ *Id.*

2. Five-Year Plan for Proposed Improvements or Upgrades

For recipients of RDOF I support, the FCC waived the requirement that winning bidders seeking an FCC ETC designation file a five-year improvement plan and demonstrate that it will satisfy applicable consumer protection and service quality standards.³¹

The FCC found that the more specific measures it had adopted for federal funding recipients to track deployment, including annual reporting of service to geocoded locations and certifications of compliance with benchmark milestones, provided a “more defined yardstick by which to measure their progress towards the universal availability of voice and broadband service in their areas.”³² Likewise, Applicant requests that the Commission waive the requirements of Reg. 103-690.C.(a)(1)(B) to submit a two-year plan describing the proposed improvements or upgrades, and the requirement of Reg. 103-690.1.B(b)(1) to file annual reports updating the initial two-year plan. Applicant will comply with the more stringent detailed broadband buildout obligations imposed by the FCC. Specifically, each support recipient must complete construction and begin commercially offering service to 40 percent of the requisite number of locations in a state by the end of the third full calendar year following funding authorization, and to an additional 20 percent in each subsequent year, with 100 per cent by the end of the sixth year.³³ To monitor compliance, the FCC has adopted reporting requirements that are essentially the same as those adopted for the CAF Phase II auction.³⁴ Those include: “reporting a list of geocoded locations each year to which the support recipient is offering the required voice and broadband services, making a certification when the support recipient has met service milestones, and submitting the

³¹ See *infra*, n. 27.

³² See WCB Reminds Connect America Fund Phase II Auction Applicants of the Process For Obtaining a Federal Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier, Public Notice, WC Docket Nos. 09-197, 10-90, DA 18-714 (rel. July 10, 2018) at pp 4-5, and p. 5, fn 34 (quoting 2016 Rate-of-Return Reform Order, 31 FCC 3166, 3168, ¶ 216).

³³ See *RDOF Auction Order* at ¶ 45.

³⁴ See *id.* at ¶ 56.

annual FCC Form 481 report.”³⁵ If a recipient fails to offer service to the required number of locations by a service milestone, FCC rules require quarterly status reporting and, in some instances, support is withheld until compliance is achieved.³⁶ Recipients are also subject to requirements to conduct quarterly measurements of speed and latency and annually report network performance.³⁷

3. WC Fiber Will Remain Functional in Emergency Situations

WC Fiber hereby certifies that it is able to function in emergency situations as set forth in §54.202(a)(2).³⁸ Applicant’s voice and broadband network is designed to remain functional in emergency situations without an external power source, is able to reroute traffic around damaged facilities, and is capable of managing traffic spikes resulting from emergency situations as required by Section 54.202(a)(2).

WC Fiber also complies with the FCC’s backup power requirements that became effective in 2015.³⁹

4. WC Fiber Will Satisfy Consumer Protection and Service Quality Standards

In establishing this certification in its *2005 ETC Order*, the FCC found that an ETC must make “a specific commitment to objective measures to protect consumers.”⁴⁰ The FCC found that for wireless ETCs, compliance with CTIA’s Consumer Code for Wireless Service would satisfy this requirement, and that the sufficiency of other commitments would be considered on a case-

³⁵ *Id.* at ¶ 17 (citations omitted).

³⁶ *Id.* at ¶ 58.

³⁷ See Connect America Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90, Order, DA 18-710 (rel. July 6, 2018).

³⁸ Section 54.202(a)(2) requires ETCs that are designated by the Commission to “demonstrate its ability to remain functional in emergency situations, including a demonstration that it has a reasonable amount of back-up power to ensure functionality without an external power source, is able to reroute traffic around damaged facilities, and is capable of maintaining traffic spikes resulting from emergency situations.”

³⁹ 47 C.F.R. § 12.5.

⁴⁰ *2005 ETC Order* at ¶ 28

by-case basis.⁴¹ In this context, the FCC stated, “to the extent a wireline or wireless ETC applicant is subject to consumer protection obligations under state law, compliance with such laws may meet our requirement.”⁴²

As stated in footnote 27 herein, the FCC has waived the requirement that winning bidders seeking an FCC ETC designation certify that it will satisfy consumer protection and service quality standards. Despite this fact, Applicant hereby certifies that it is complying with applicable service quality standards and consumer protection rules, including complying with Lifeline service standards pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.408 including minimum broadband speed requirements, data usage allowance, and accessibility to WIFI devices.

VI. WC Fiber will Satisfy Applicable State-Specific ETC Requirements

Commission Regulation 103-690.C. provides the requirements for initial designation as an ETC. The state regulation generally tracked the corresponding federal regulations at the time the state regulation was promulgated in 2008. Since that time, the federal regulations have changed, and some of the state-specific requirements may not be applicable.

WC Fiber commits to providing service throughout its proposed designated service area to all customers making a reasonable request for service, as required by R. 103-690.C.(1)(A).

As explained in Section V.C.2. above, WC Fiber requests a waiver of the requirement to submit a 2-year plan pursuant to R. 103-690.C.(1)(B), and the requirement of Reg. 103-690.1.B(b)(1) to file annual reports updating the initial two-year plan, for the reasons stated

⁴¹ *Id.* The FCC noted that under the CTIA Consumer Code, wireless carriers agree to: “(1) disclose rates and terms of service to customers; (2) make available maps showing where service is generally available; (3) provide contract terms to customers and confirm changes in service; (4) allow a trial period for new services; (5) provide specific disclosures in advertising; (6) separately identify carrier charges from taxes on billing statements; (7) provide customers the right to terminate service for changes to contract terms; (8) provide ready access to customer service; (9) promptly respond to consumer inquiries and complaints received from government agencies; and (10) abide by policies for protection of consumer privacy.” *Id.* at n. 71.

⁴² *Id.* at n. 72.

therein. The Commission may waive a rule or regulation where circumstances indicate that a waiver is appropriate, upon a finding that such waiver is not contrary to the public interest.⁴³ WC Fiber respectfully submits that the requirement should be waived in this case. In lieu of filing the two-year plan provided for in Reg. 103-690.C.(a)(1)(B), WC Fiber will make available to the Commission and ORS upon request all reports it is required to file with the FCC in connection with the RDOF I funding for the Proposed Service Area.

WC Fiber has demonstrated its ability to remain functional in emergency situations, as explained in Section V.C.3. above, in compliance with R. 103-690.C.(2). WC Fiber has demonstrated that it will satisfy applicable consumer protection and service quality standards, as explained in Section V.C.4. above, in compliance with R. 103-690.C.(3).

WC Fiber will offer local service plans comparable to those offered by the incumbent LEC in the service areas for which it seeks designation, as explained in Section V.B.2. above, in compliance with R. 103-690.C.(a)(4).

Attached to this Application, as required by R. 103-690.C.(a)(5)-(7), is the Affidavit of Jeff T. Wilson, an officer of WC Fiber, certifying that WC Fiber acknowledges that the FCC may require it to provide equal access to long distance carriers in the event that no other ETC is providing equal access within the service area; that WC Fiber does offer or will offer the services supported by federal universal service support by using its own facilities or a combination of its own facilities and resale of another carrier's services; and that it does or will advertise in a media of general distribution the availability of such services, including Lifeline services and the applicable charges.

⁴³ See S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 103-803.

VII. Granting This Application Will Serve the Public Interest

WC Fiber's designation as an ETC for the Proposed Service Area will allow it to build out unserved or underserved areas using federal funding, bringing the benefits of high-speed broadband to these areas. Accordingly, it is in the public interest to designate WC Fiber as an ETC in the RDOF I Proposed Service Area. Once the Commission grants WC Fiber's ETC application and the FCC approves Applicant for funding, the Applicant will receive \$98,189.50 over a ten-year period which it will use to provide Gigabit broadband to those residing and working in the Proposed Service Area.

VIII. Requests for Waiver of Commission Regulations

In addition to the waiver requested in Section V.C.2. above of the requirement to file a two-year plan and annual updates, WC Fiber respectfully requests a waiver of R. 103-690.C.(b) to the extent it would prohibit designation of WC Fiber as an ETC in an area smaller than a wire center. As described above, the FCC has established a mechanism to ensure the deployment of broadband to unserved and underserved areas. It has done so by undertaking a granular analysis, at the Census Block level, to target funding to such areas. If the Commission were to deny WC Fiber the designation it requests at the Census Block level in order to obtain available federal funding to serve the Proposed Service Area, those areas likely would remain unserved or underserved. Therefore, it is in the public interest to grant the requested waiver of that portion of R. 103-690.C(b) that provides that the Commission shall not designate an ETC service area smaller than an entire wire center.

IX. Conclusion and Request for Expedited Review

In order to be eligible for the federal funding available to Applicant under RDOF I, the FCC requires that WC Fiber be designated as an ETC in the areas for which it seeks support not

later than June 7, 2021. For the reasons stated above, granting this Application will serve the public interest by allowing WC Fiber to use available federal funding to bring robust broadband service to certain unserved areas of the State. WC Fiber respectfully requests that the Commission grant this application in an expeditious manner to enable it to meet the FCC's deadline. Attached hereto is the sworn Affidavit of Jeff T. Wilson, an officer of WC Fiber, attesting to the truth and accuracy of this Application, and making the certifications required by Commission Regulation 103-690.C.(a)(5)-(7).

Respectfully submitted,



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Attorneys for WC Fiber, LLC

Columbia, South Carolina

January 6, 2021

EXHIBIT A**CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS AND NUMBER OF LOCATIONS:**

State	County	Census Block Groups	Locations
SC	Abbeville	450019506001	2
SC	Anderson	450070107002	43
SC	Anderson	450070107003	18
SC	Anderson	450070109003	170
SC	Anderson	450070109004	14
SC	Anderson	450070122001	3
SC	Greenwood	450479703012	1
SC	Greenwood	450479703021	23
SC	Greenwood	450479704003	7
SC	Greenwood	450479706001	2
SC	Greenwood	450479706002	2
SC	Greenwood	450479706004	1
SC	McCormick	450659202001	90
SC	Oconee	450730309022	193
SC	Pickens	450770110022	11
SC	Pickens	450770110032	114
SC	Pickens	450770111011	68
SC	Pickens	450770111012	20
SC	Pickens	450770111021	79
SC	Pickens	450770111031	84
Totals	6	20	945

EXHIBIT A (Cont'd)

ELIGIBLE CENSUS BLOCKS WITHIN THE CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS (I.E. CENSUS BLOCKS FOR WHICH WC FIBER, LLC SEEKS ETC DESIGNATION):

<u>State</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Census Block Group</u>	<u>Census Block</u>
SC	Abbeville	450019506001	450019506001025
SC	Anderson	450070107002	450070107002000
SC	Anderson	450070107002	450070107002002
SC	Anderson	450070107002	450070107002004
SC	Anderson	450070107002	450070107002008
SC	Anderson	450070107002	450070107002014
SC	Anderson	450070107002	450070107002019
SC	Anderson	450070107002	450070107002023
SC	Anderson	450070107003	450070107003020
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003002
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003003
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003005
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003006
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003007
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003009
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003012
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003013
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003015
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003018
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003019
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003020
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003022
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003023
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003034
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003036
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003096
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003098
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003099
SC	Anderson	450070109003	450070109003135
SC	Anderson	450070109004	450070109004006
SC	Anderson	450070109004	450070109004007
SC	Anderson	450070109004	450070109004008

EXHIBIT A (Cont'd)

ELIGIBLE CENSUS BLOCKS WITHIN THE CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS (I.E. CENSUS BLOCKS FOR WHICH WC FIBER, LLC SEEKS ETC DESIGNATION): (Cont'd)

<u>State</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Census Block Group</u>	<u>Census Block</u>
SC	Anderson	450070122001	450070122001080
SC	Greenwood	450479703012	450479703012019
SC	Greenwood	450479703021	450479703021006
SC	Greenwood	450479703021	450479703021008
SC	Greenwood	450479703021	450479703021009
SC	Greenwood	450479704003	450479704003024
SC	Greenwood	450479704003	450479704003025
SC	Greenwood	450479704003	450479704003094
SC	Greenwood	450479706001	450479706001029
SC	Greenwood	450479706002	450479706002014
SC	Greenwood	450479706004	450479706004028
SC	McCormick	450659202001	450659202001016
SC	McCormick	450659202001	450659202001049
SC	McCormick	450659202001	450659202001050
SC	McCormick	450659202001	450659202001052
SC	McCormick	450659202001	450659202001053
SC	McCormick	450659202001	450659202001054
SC	McCormick	450659202001	450659202001055
SC	McCormick	450659202001	450659202001056
SC	McCormick	450659202001	450659202001070
SC	McCormick	450659202001	450659202001071
SC	McCormick	450659202001	450659202001115
SC	McCormick	450659202001	450659202001117
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022011
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022016
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022017
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022018
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022019
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022031
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022036
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022039
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022041

EXHIBIT A (Cont'd)

ELIGIBLE CENSUS BLOCKS WITHIN THE CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS (I.E. CENSUS BLOCKS FOR WHICH WC FIBER, LLC SEEKS ETC DESIGNATION): (Cont'd)

<u>State</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Census Block Group</u>	<u>Census Block</u>
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022042
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022043
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022049
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022077
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022081
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022082
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022086
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022087
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022088
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022091
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022092
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022093
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022095
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022099
SC	Oconee	450730309022	450730309022102
SC	Pickens	450770110022	450770110022018
SC	Pickens	450770110022	450770110022030
SC	Pickens	450770110022	450770110022087
SC	Pickens	450770110022	450770110022099
SC	Pickens	450770110032	450770110032008
SC	Pickens	450770110032	450770110032017
SC	Pickens	450770110032	450770110032018
SC	Pickens	450770110032	450770110032019
SC	Pickens	450770110032	450770110032034
SC	Pickens	450770110032	450770110032035
SC	Pickens	450770110032	450770110032038
SC	Pickens	450770110032	450770110032040
SC	Pickens	450770111011	450770111011002
SC	Pickens	450770111011	450770111011010
SC	Pickens	450770111011	450770111011011
SC	Pickens	450770111011	450770111011012
SC	Pickens	450770111011	450770111011050

EXHIBIT A (Cont'd)

ELIGIBLE CENSUS BLOCKS WITHIN THE CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS (I.E. CENSUS BLOCKS FOR WHICH WC FIBER, LLC SEEKS ETC DESIGNATION): (Cont'd)

<u>State</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Census Block Group</u>	<u>Census Block</u>
SC	Pickens	450770111011	450770111011060
SC	Pickens	450770111011	450770111011061
SC	Pickens	450770111012	450770111012000
SC	Pickens	450770111012	450770111012007
SC	Pickens	450770111012	450770111012028
SC	Pickens	450770111012	450770111012065
SC	Pickens	450770111012	450770111012066
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021000
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021004
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021005
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021006
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021007
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021011
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021019
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021029
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021046
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021051
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021052
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021057
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021059
SC	Pickens	450770111021	450770111021060
SC	Pickens	450770111031	450770111031025
SC	Pickens	450770111031	450770111031026
SC	Pickens	450770111031	450770111031036
SC	Pickens	450770111031	450770111031045
SC	Pickens	450770111031	450770111031047
SC	Pickens	450770111031	450770111031060

EXHIBIT B

Map of Census Block Groups



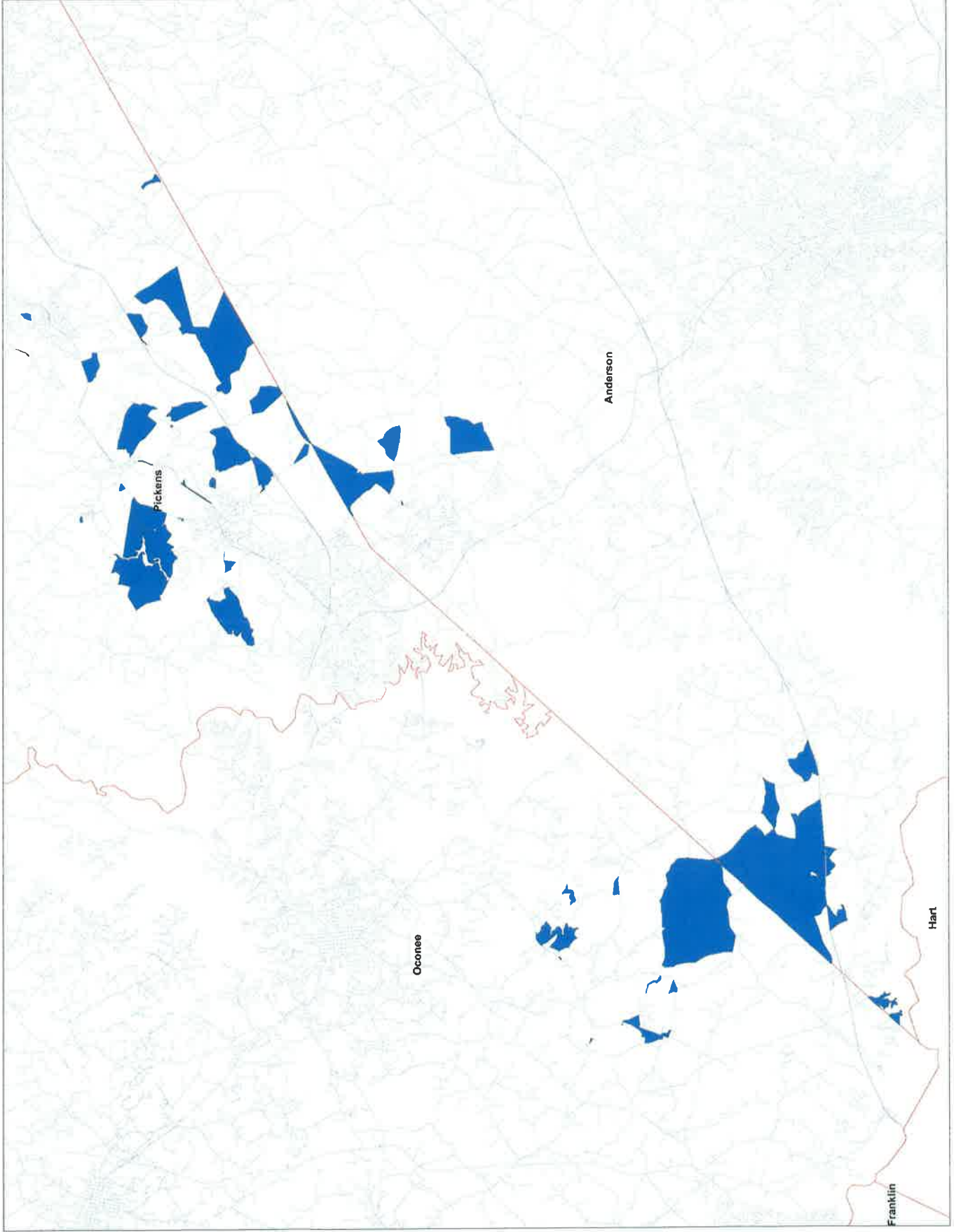
Proposed EIC Designation
Area in South Carolina
Map 1 of 4



Legend

- Awarded Auction Blocks
- County Boundary
- Road Centerline

Date: 01/05/2021

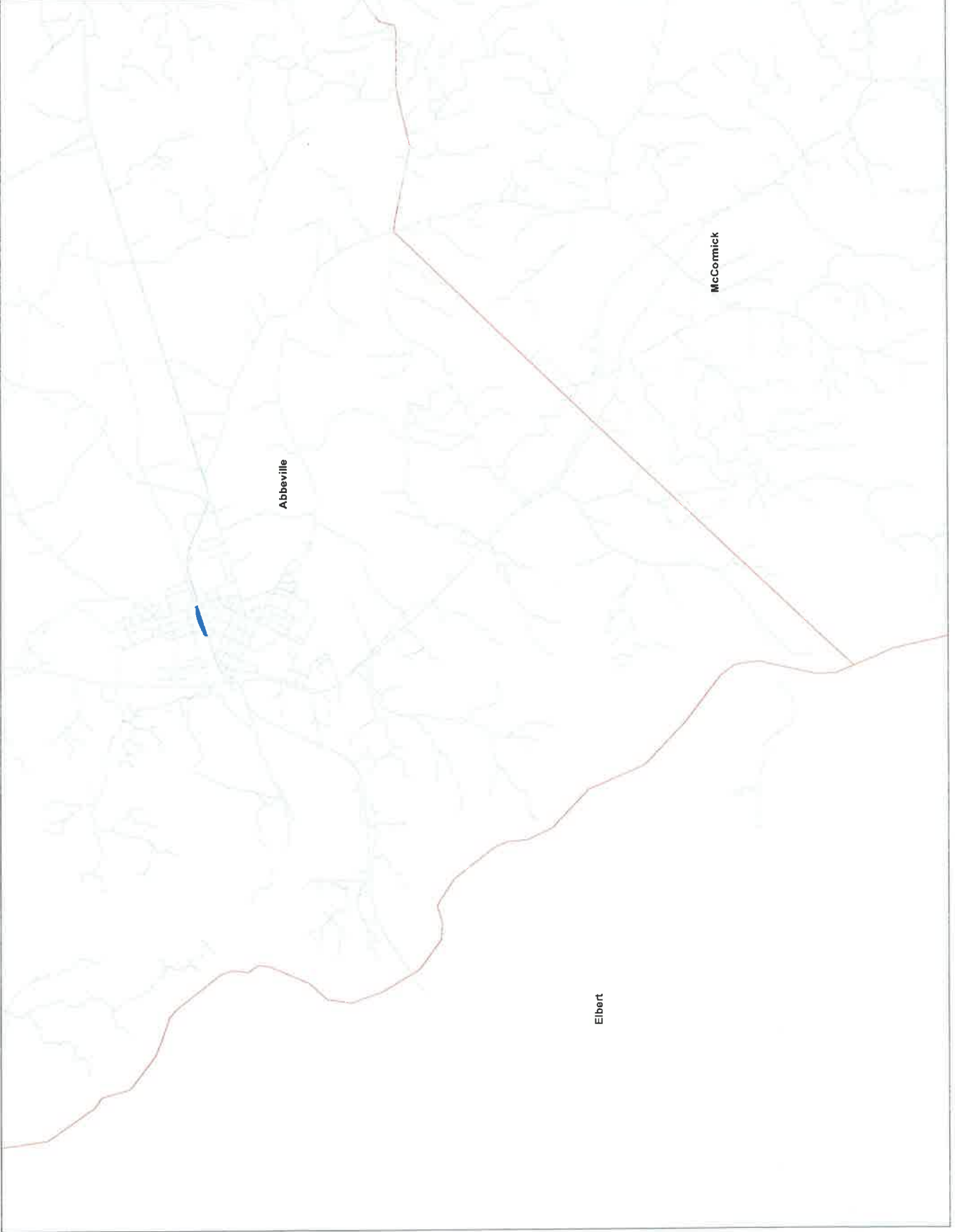


Date: 01/05/2021

- Legend**
- Awarded Auction Blocks
 - County Boundary
 - Road Centerline



Proposed EIC Designation
Area in South Carolina
Map 2 of 4





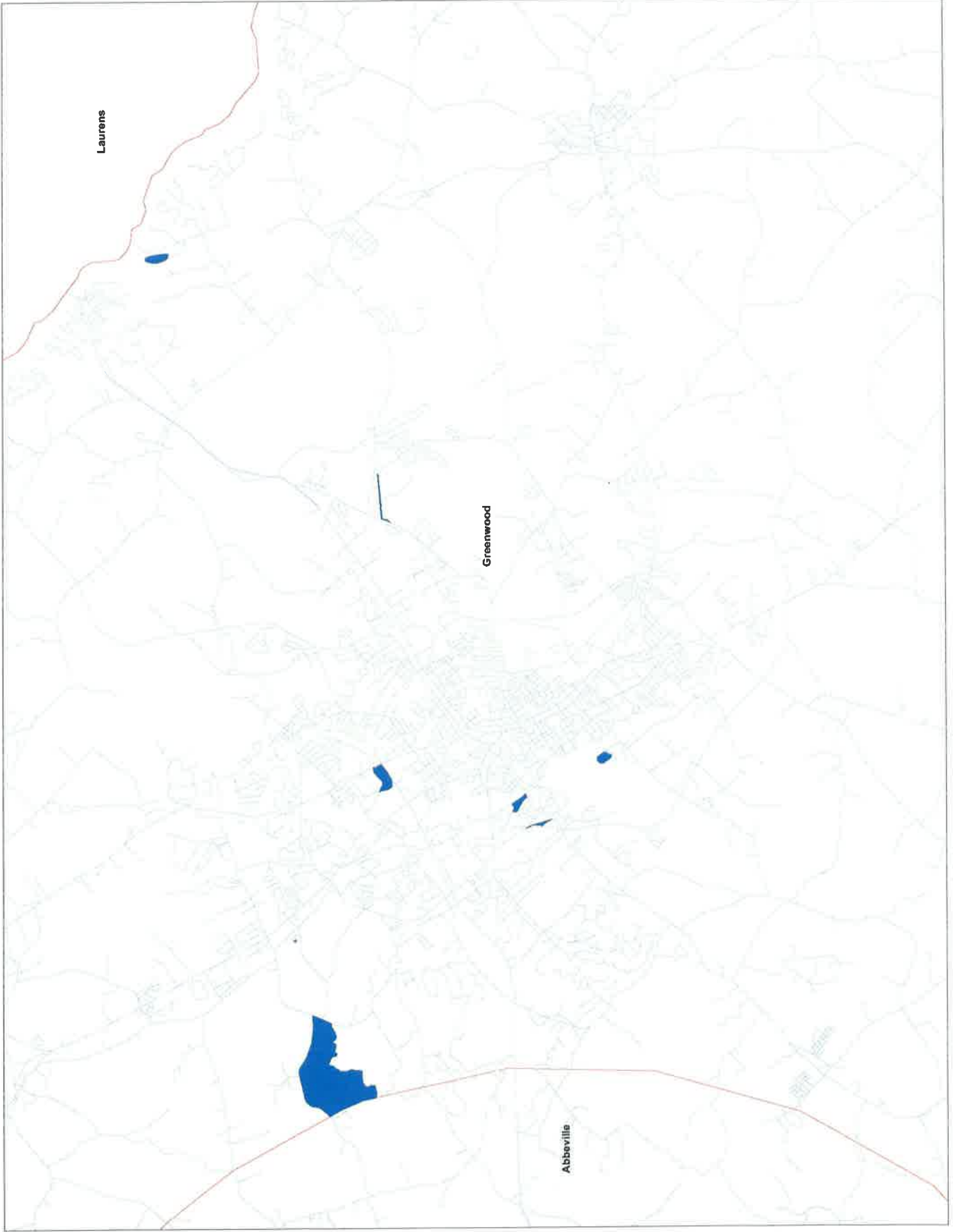
Proposed EIC Designation
Area in South Carolina
Map 3 of 4



Legend

- Awarded Auction Blocks
- County Boundary
- Road Centerline

Date: 01/05/2021

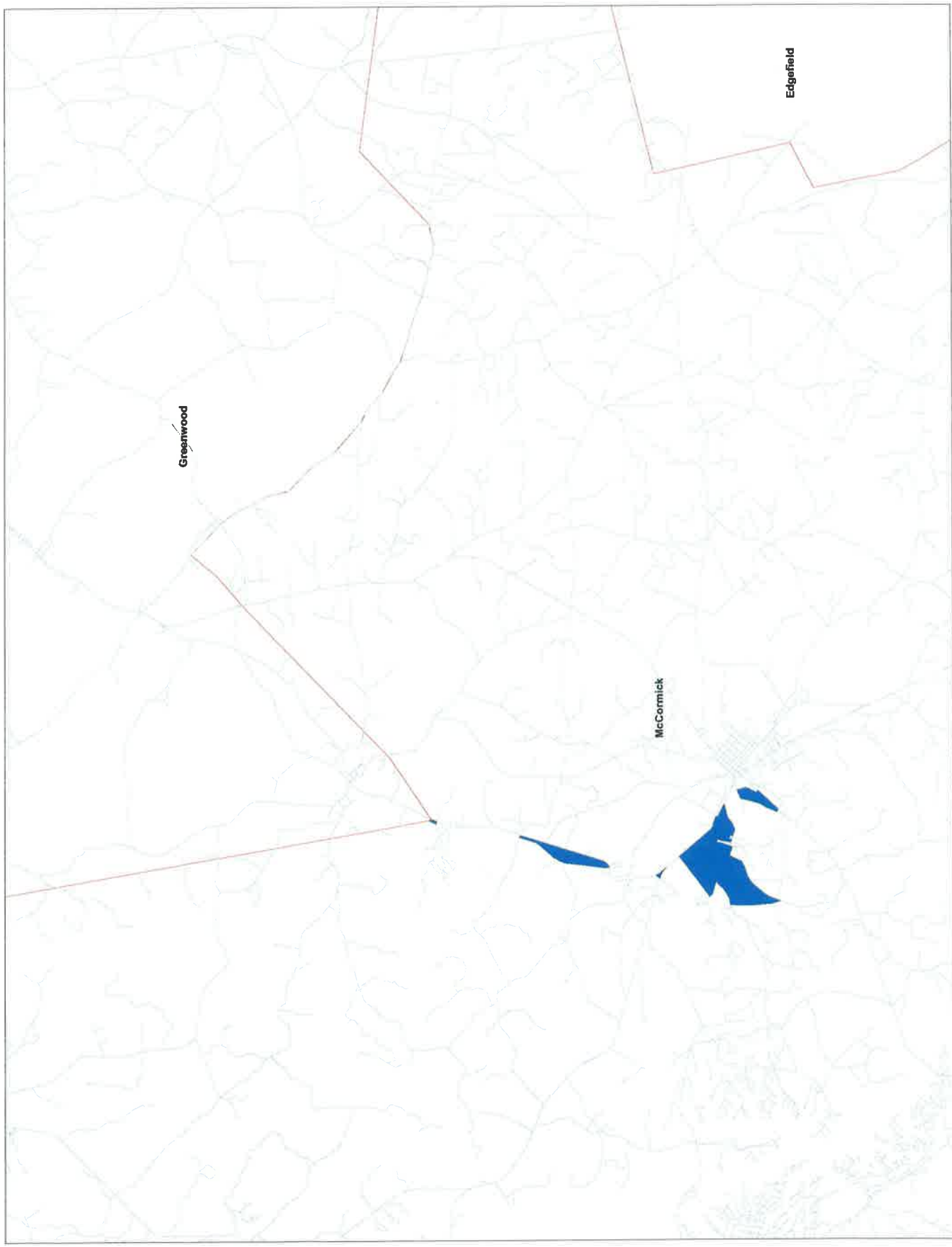


Date: 01/05/2021

- Legend**
- Awarded Auction Blocks
 - County Boundary
 - Road Centerline



**Proposed EIC Designation
Area in South Carolina
Map 4 of 4**



**BEFORE
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DOCKET NO. 2021-__-C**

IN RE:

Application of WC Fiber, LLC for Designation)
as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier)
In Certain Census Blocks in Abbeville, Anderson,)
Greenwood, McCormick, Oconee, and Pickens)
Counties for Purposes of Receiving Federal Rural Digital)
Opportunity Fund ("RDOF") Phase I Support)
_____)

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF ABBEVILLE

AFFIDAVIT


PERSONALLY APPEARED BEFORE ME the undersigned WHO, BEING DULY
SWORN, deposed and said:

1. My name is Jeff T. Wilson. I am employed by WC Fiber, LLC (the "Company"), as its Chief Executive Officer. I am an officer of the Company and am authorized to give this Affidavit on behalf of the Company.
2. I have read the foregoing Application in the above-captioned matter and know the contents thereof; and said contents are true and accurate.
3. The Company acknowledges that the Federal Communications Commission may require it to provide equal access to long distance carriers in the event that no other eligible telecommunications carrier is providing equal access within the service area.

4. The Company does offer or will offer the services that are supported by the federal universal service support mechanisms by using its own facilities or a combination of its own facilities and resale of another carrier's services.

5. The Company does or will advertise in a media of general distribution the availability of such services, including Lifeline services and the applicable charges.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.



Jeff T. Wilson
Chief Executive Officer
WC Fiber, LLC

Subscribed to and sworn before me this 4th day of January 2021.



NOTARY PUBLIC FOR SOUTH CAROLINA

CHARLES NASH

Printed Name of Notary

My Commission Expires: 11/14/2029